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ANCIENT IRISH LITERATURE.

ANTIQUITY OF CORN AND MILLS IN IRELAND.

In various preceding numbers of our Journal, we have endeavoured to expose the mistakes proceeding from ignorance of writers who suppose that, previous to the arrival of the English, the Irish were in a state of almost utter barbarism. Among other erroneous assertions, it has been stated, and very generally believed, that we were wholly a pastoral people, wandering about with our herds of cattle, like the ancient Scythians, from whom we are supposed to derive our descent. Ledwich, indeed, acknowledges that his favorite, Giraldus Cambrensis, mentions the mills of St. Lucherin and St. Fechin, but considers them as solitary instances of their kind erected by the monks, and states, that "querns" (or grinding stones), "were generally used, and seem to have been sufficient for the agriculture of Ireland to a late period." That this statement, like most others in the "Antiquities" of that learned writer, is wholly erroneous, we shall satisfactorily prove, from an authority which cannot rationally be doubted. The following extracts, respecting mills, corn, &c., are from MSS. in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, which are copies from more ancient ones on vellum, in the library of Trinity College, class E. Tab. 3. No. 5. The original is faithfully given, in order to lay before the lovers of Gaelic lore a specimen of the language in which these laws are written, and it will manifestly appear, from the extreme difficulty with which those only acquainted with the modern dialects of Ireland or Scotland, could understand a single phrase thereof—that they must have been written at a period very remote indeed. This will still further appear from the fact, that, though the text is interlined with a gloss of comparatively modern age, yet even that commentary or explanation is now quite obsolete, and to most Irish scholars nearly as unintelligible as the text itself.

Bla Muylind blejt .j. denta dñajt a cet-
ycejm cen fjr etollajr jnand rceð bla jn ujnð
on cet ycejm amac a fjr a tñajr, raer, rceð
fej blejtche rceð fej Muylind, jrajc do fjr
Muylind, o bjaj fjr ac fej Muylind, cjd be aca
mbe majlle fñajr, jre fej Muylind jcur, aet jn
nj toñmajrger ajce rceð nemajce fñajr fej
blejtche fñajr rajr, jmuñno, rceð fjr blejt jre
fej blejtche jcur rceð noa n-jeann raer Muyl-
ind.

Slan don tj do nj an m-blejtch jrn Muylind
.j. denta dñajt cetrycejm jn Muylind. Cjd f.
cona denta dñajt cetrycejm jn Muylind ym
rceð cona ed cetrycejm jn ujnð tuar? Jre
f. f. mo jr denta dñajtch jn nj ujl ac jmluad
an Muylind ym jn t-ajrej jna jn nj ujl ac
jmluad an ujnð tuar lama na n-dajne. Ware
jn dajna ycejm cen fjr etollajr lejt ajthgjn.
jn eyb. rceð jn etarbayð ajthg. j toñbach,
rceð jn aer comhgnmajr lejt dñe la ajthg.
jmuñ co fajerjn na nob, rceð mana facajð, jr
ajthgjn.

Ma re jn tñer ycejm co fjr etollajr ceth.u
dñela ajthgjn j toñbach, rceð jn aer comh-
gnmajr lan dñela h-ajthgjn jmuñ co fajerjn
na nob rceð mana facajð jt. jr lejt dñe la
ajthgjn. Ware aj ceatamad ycejm co fjr
etallajr lejt la ajthgjn jn eybajð rceð jn etar-
bayð, lan dñe la ajthgjn j toñbach rceð jn aer
Comgnma, rceð no rñact lan cena j muñ.

Ma ta fej bunajð ajajnd rceða ta raer
rceð ata fej blejtche rceð ata fjr ac fñajr bu-
najð jr ule atajð a cñajð d'je d'fñajr bunajð.
Muna fuñ fej bunajð aj ajnd jt. no ce bejtch
muna fuñ fñajr ajce, rceð ata fjr ac raer jn

neoc do muñmac fjr d'je do raer, jn neoc do
muñmac ajce rceð nemuñrcañtad do comje
dojb etorñia.

Cjd f. con-jeand fej blejtch cñta jn Muylind
ymñ, cñ ymñ gab do lajm bjç fo cñtajð, rceð
cona hjeand jn dajne tuar cñta jn nejtch ma-
nari gab do lajm bjth fo cñtajð? Jre f. f. do
zenad jn tech tuar jn-dljgñ cen co cluajrtea
he rceð cojn, cemad t-rlan jn tj no gluañrejt.
he ona zeba dolajm bjth fo cñtajð jn Muylind,
jmuñna no co n-dñgñed jnblg muna gluañrtea
he cojn ce no bejtch ajcñ foñrñntj no gluañrjt.
he.

Bla Muylind blejt .j. rlan d'fñajr jn Muylind
cjd bed zabar jt. ada fej cñdaer bejtchñj cñ-
daer jnbejtchñj.

Slan don cet ycejm na bño jñr cae naen no
doñ comad tñajr najtchgne jna cetrycejm jn
cae naen tñe doð lejtch aj am. aer comgnmajr
rceð ajthgjn jrn cñajð tanajrte rceð lejt
fñach la ajthgjn jrn tñer ycejm rceð lan
fñach la ajthgjn jrn cetñamad ycejm, rceð
jr amajr cet ycejm do zñer dñe n-dajngñntej
cach fejt rceð mad e jn raer facbur dñoch
reol fajr, jre jcur na fñacha ro ujl mad no
tñejr jn t-ajrej jmuñna rceð jn dñoch reol bjñ
fajr jr e fej jn Muylind jcur na fñaca ujl.

OF GRINDING AT THE MILL.

If the mill stone should slide off or break without the knowledge of any one, it is then as the sledge should slide off the anvil. There are three concerned, viz. the mill-wright, the man who is grinding his corn, and the miller. If the miller knew that there was any danger, he is forthcoming for any trespass done. If the mill-wright and the man who is grinding his corn fear any thing to happen, the man who is grinding his corn is answerable for any damage done afterwards, and the mill-wright is free.

Why is the first sliding of the mill-stone a trespass here, and the first sliding of the sledge not made a fine above?*

The reason is as the mill is turned by water the sledge by hands of men.

If the miller, the mill-wright and the man whose corn is being grinding be present and that the miller knew there was any danger, he is answerable for all the damage. If the miller be not present whether he knew that there was danger or not, and should the mill-wright be present knowing that there was danger in regard to his own work, he is answerable for any damages that shall happen.

Why is the man whose corn is being grinding charged here for a trespass, and why is the other not charged?

The reason is : the man whose corn is being grinding, made no obstacle and took upon him to be under any damage that might happen.

The miller is free if the rest consented to go on with the grinding. The first sliding of the stone is not to be charged to any. If the mill-wright should leave the mill in bad order after him, he is to pay all the debt or damage, and if any mischance should happen by the strength of the water when the mill is not in bad order, the miller then is to pay all the fines.

Bla Eça Jthlano.†

Slan doñ tj do nj jn njth jlojnd jn etha .j. o
foñerñajð na ajbele na hetallajr rceð o do
zentar jmandenta dljgñeça jat na cñuaca ada

* In another part of the Brehon Laws where the laws of forges are given.

A great part of these laws are carried on by way of question and answer.

† Jthlann, (now corruptly called by the peasantry in many parts of Ireland, "haggard,") is derived from *Jth*, corn, and *Lann*, a repository.

OF CORN YARDS, BARNS, &c.

I shall add one authority more from the Annals of the Four Masters under the year 998.

The stone of Ailbhe fell (Moyilve was the chief fortress of Moybra) and Maelseaghlainn (King of Temor) made four mill-stones of it.

Concerning the mills, plough shares, chariots, corn, barns &c. of the ancient Irish the following parts of Colgan's Acta, SS. may be consulted.

See also Adamnan's *Life of Columbkille*, lib. 2. c. 3.
 . 351. and lib. 3. cap. 23. p. 370. J. O'DONOVAN.

"Why, sir, when I feel myself merry enough without it, where's the use in taking it? That stream can slake my thirst as well. Yet I'll not speak for others—many a one

The ladies are informed, in conclusion, that the squire's forfeited sheep were given to Cauthleen as a dower, and in taking the hand of her shepherd, she promised never again to put his truth and constancy to so severe a trial. T.E.